

REMARKS

Claims 4, 104, 111-113, and 115-117 are pending in the application. Claims 5-13, 79-82, 93-99, 101-103, and 105-108 stand withdrawn by the Office. Claims 1, 2, 100, 110, and 114 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 4, 104, 111, and 115 have been rewritten in independent form. Claims 112, 113, 116, and 117 have been amended to correct claim dependencies and to recite the subject matter with even greater particularity. Support for the amendments can be found throughout the specification and claims as originally filed. No new matter has been introduced.

Claim Objections

According to the Office Action at page 4, claims 4, 104, 111-113, and 115-117 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 4, 104, 111, and 115 have been rewritten in independent form, incorporating the limitations of each base claim. Claims 112 and 113 have been amended to depend from claim 111. Similarly, claims 116 and 117 have been amended to depend from claim 115. Thus, all of claims 4, 104, 111-113, and 115-117 should be allowable.

35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1, 2, 100, 110, and 114 were rejected as allegedly unpatentable over Cope *et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 5,658,531; “Cope”) in view of Kvitrud (U.S. Patent No. 4,632,672). Applicants do not concede that claims 1, 2, 100, 110, and 114 are obvious. Nonetheless, in the interest of moving the present application towards allowance, applicants have canceled claims 1, 2, 100, 110, and 114 without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants respectfully submit that this amendment obviates the present rejection and request that it be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

Applicants believe that all of the pending objections/rejections have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue, or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue, or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this paper, and the amendment or cancellation of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment or cancellation.

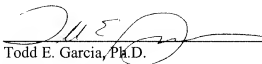
The fees in the amount of \$440.00 for the excess claim fee is being paid on the electronic filing system by way of deposit account authorization. Please apply any other charges or credits to Deposit Account No. 06-1050, referencing Attorney Docket No. 14255-0034001.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: _____

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